# Panel's 'New Evidence' In King Death Is Called Old Stuff By Task Force

By MORRIS CUNNINGHAM
From The Commercial Appeal Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The House Assassinations Committee Tuesday revealed some "new evidence" in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but a Justice Department task force that investigated the King case said it was old stuff and of no significance.

Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), the committee chairman, arose on the House floor to say that a man known as Leon Owen 'Shotgun' Powell had stated that in the fall of 1967 in Atlanta, he and his brother, Claude Powell, had been offered a "contract" to kill Dr. King.

Stokes said 'Shotgun' Powell had taken his story to the FBI in January, 1976, and that the FBI had turned over to the Justice Department the results of its inquiry, which included polygraph (lie detector) tests of the Powell brothers.

Stokes said the committee subpenaed Claude Powell but that he has refused to appear, citing "fear for his life" as a reason.

Informed of Stokes' statement, a member of the Justice Department task force said the incident was considered and discounted by the task force in the course of its eight-month inquiry into the King case.

The inquiry was headed by Michael E. Shaheen Jr., former mayor of Como, Miss., who is director of the Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility.

A 201-page report released Jan. 11, 1977, found that James Earl Ray killed Dr. King and that the evidence indicates he acted alone.

A task force member said statements of known facts. The results were negative."

the Powell brothers, as well as the FBI investigation of their allegations, were considered and discounted as being without significance.

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IN WASHINGTON —

# Investigations Pick Up

By MILES BENSON
Newhouse News Service

The House is expected to vote this week to spend another $2.5 million to finish the investigations of the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., begun 16 months ago.

A team of 115 lawyers, investigators, researchers, consultants and other aides assembled for the twin investigations has now completed virtually all field work in both cases, according to one source.

Plans now call for the 12-member Select House Committee on Assassinations to begin holding secret sessions three times weekly to question witnesses in each case. The closed-door sessions will continue through the summer or fall, when the panel will present its findings in a final round of public hearings which may last another month or more.

Robert Lehner, the former New York City homicide prosecutor who led the task force reinvestigating the King killing for the past year, has left the committee staff. It was Lehner who last year conducted extensive interviews in prison with James Earl Ray, the King killer.

Chief Counsel Robert Blakey refused to discuss Lehner's departure.

IN AN INTERIM report to the House, the assassination committee described several "special projects" currently underway in each investigation.

"Some of these projects have never before been undertaken to evaluate available evidence concerning the assassinations," the report said. "In other cases, advances in scientific technology will allow issues to be analyzed in significantly greater depth and detail than was possible at the time of the assassinations."

For example, an acoustical project designed by the committee will utilize sound recordings made in Dallas' Dealey Plaza on Nov. 22, 1963, when Kennedy was shot.

"From original sound recordings it is now possible to illustrate the audible sounds by means of a computer print-out of decibel frequencies," the report said. "An expert analysis of these decibel frequencies may enable the committee to determine the number, direction and timing sequence of the shots fired in Dealey Plaza."

ANOTHER SPECIAL project involves photographs and computers in a trajectory study that will attempt to trace outward from the president the trajectory of the bullets that struck him.

John F. Kennedy

"This approach to determine the trajectory of the bullets has not been attempted previously," the report said. "Prior trajectory studies commenced with tracing from the assumed location of the assassin as opposed to tracing from the location of the president's wounds."

The panel also has hired its own ballistics and firearms experts to conduct microscopic, visual and chemical analyses, and test firings.

Nine forensic pathologists have been retained as consultants to restudy the nature and cases of the wounds on President Kennedy and on former Texas Gov. John Connally, who was in the car with the slain president.

At the suggestion of the pathologists the committee has ordered a series of new tests including soft X-ray and other techniques of determining whether the clothing worn by President Kennedy and Connally contains any metal tracings, and anatomy studies to trace the origin of particular bone fragments.

In addition, there will be other studies of handwriting, wound ballistics and medical evidence.

# Weisberg receives CIA information on bending mind

A local resident noted for his investigations of the government has received new material from the Central Intelligence Agency.

Harold Weisberg, who authored books and articles questioning the government's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, said Wednesday he received 14,375 pages of data from the CIA.

"I made the request two years ago and they finally came through," Weisberg said. "Supposedly they have 10 days to provide the information or a letter explaining delay. They did nothing until I leaned on them a few weeks ago."

Weisberg said the data deals with the CIA's "mind bending" activities.

"I have not had a chance to read it yet, but it is a horrible thing — toying with the human mind," he said, "and in the name of national security."

Weisberg said he was charged 10 cents per page for the material and hoped to do some articles or a book on the subject later. "I am just too busy right now," he said.

Weisberg said he has been gathering similar information for some period of time and the data is only part of his files.